

HARLEM FRIENDSHIP HOUSE NEWS

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MY FRIEND AND YOURS

by Emanuel A. Romero

"With Deep Affection for the Priceless Gift of True Friendship"

THESE words are written on a photograph of the Baroness Catherine de Hueck which she gave to a friend. The picture hangs on the wall of a tiny room where this friend lives. The picture and the words written thereon are a constant reminder of the warmth and depth of true friendship. This is but one evidence of the far reaching influence of Baroness de Hueck.

Her pen is mightier than the sword. She cuts deep wounds into racial prejudice as she inveighs against its pernicious practices. As a public speaker she finds many and frequent opportunities on her speaking tours to appeal to the conscience of her Catholic audiences. She pleads with them for social justice. The kind of social justice which stresses interracial justice and reaffirms "in action the great Christian virtues of justice and charity." When begging alms, not for herself, but for God's poor, her appeals are masterpieces of human sympathy. She reaches unexpected sources. Too often she makes friends of those who come to scoff and jeer. When she is at her headquarters in New York her hands are never idle. Her workers learn by doing and if needs be she goes on her knees not only to pray but to show them how the work should be done and to help them. She is a trained nurse who has seen service in time of war as well as in time of peace. With unexpected frequency she climbs stairs to visit her friends, the poor, to give them a word of comfort and of good cheer and to share with them their simple dish. She is a study in energy—little time to eat, less time to sleep; but lots of time to pray, to write, to speak, to work with hands and feet. And even though she be weary and hungry, there is always a glad welcome for a beggar or for a friend. She is one of God's heroic souls among the Lay Apostolate.

The Baroness has had a lifelong interest in the cause of social justice.

It dates back to her early childhood during the Russian Revolution. As a Russian girl living in those days of social and political unrest, she witnessed and experienced the destruction of her home and family life. She saw members of her own family shot to death before her very eyes. Then she began a journey from Russia to Finland, from Finland to England, from England to Canada, and then

across the border from Canada to Harlem. It is a story of struggle of the homeless reduced to almost abject poverty and want, yet she rises up to be its master. Of one without a country, seeking help and friendship as a stranger in a strange world. Did she find it?

IN the establishment of Friendship House No. 1, the Baroness did great work in Toronto, Canada, among the under-privileged whites. She had consecrated her life and talent to the cause of social justice. By prayer, fasting and alms deed she had strengthened her own life, and now she was ready to do the task for which she is best known—interracial justice.

It is five years since the Baroness came to Harlem on February 14, 1938, unheralded and unknown. She brought the Lord. The cry for social justice kept ringing in her ears. She longed for the one chance to apply her philosophy of life—interracial justice—but interracial justice of a sort that had never been applied before. The practice completely of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The living of the Mystical Body of Christ. First, by personal sanctification and then, by hard and self-denying work, with the hope of everlasting reward through charity and justice for all. With a dynamic personality and the unswerving faith in a cause that is as just as it is worthy, she has influenced a large and growing following of both clergy and laity, and more recently, members of the American Hierarchy.

THROUGH the medium of her project known as "Friendship House" the Baroness hopes to establish eventually "an Apostolate for the Negro by the Negro." Not only is she fostering the higher education of Negroes even through professional schools, she is engaged in education and enlightening young white college

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S. FRANCIS



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HARLEM FRIENDSHIP HOUSE NEWS

CATHERINE DE HUECK Editor
 NANCY GRENNELL Asst. Editor
 EDDIE DOHERTY Contributing Editor
 ELEANOR MERRILL Circulation Manager

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Printed in N. Y. by Carroll Press**COMMANDOS OF GOD**

DARK is the world. Dark and bleak are its cities. Night has conquered light, and reigns supreme. But darkness is the mother of many evils, and like a poisonous flower it spreads its heavy scent into men's frightened, restless hearts. Unaccustomed to darkness, men grope for the ways familiar to yesterday — gone today. Sign-posts are blurred, old roads seem to have branched into a thousand new paths that lead—no one knows—where!

Fear is the brother of darkness. Restlessness, its sister. In a world's blackout they have come stealthily and softly to make their home in men's souls. Under their constant urging, men seek solace in things they can "touch" and "feel." Wine, women and song are some of these . . . but not all. For passing shadows cannot hold men's souls for long. Blinded by darkness, they see clearly only the face of grinning death everywhere—on earth, and in the skies . . . In agony, they listen for a Voice that will give them peace. Peace in the midst of War. Peace of soul and mind. Deep, lasting peace, that will heal the cleavage that is within them. But the world is bleak, dark and full of noises, and many voices . . . each louder than the other. Each calling out in the night—"I am peace . . . I have peace . . . come to me." But the real Voice of Peace is soft and healing. It needs silence to be heard. Reverent silence. And men today, frayed of nerves, cannot be silent. And so they cannot hear the Words of Peace and Life . . . The Voice of God.

On many distant shores the world over, at the zero hour, men move softly in the night. Clad in black they blend with her darkness . . . completely. Their faces are smeared with mud. They move—part and parcel of the night. Commandos — specially trained. Every muscle alert and strong. Mind and body coordinated in every move. The flower of youth is chosen for the grim task of sudden attack . . . yet they attack only to restore light to the world, life and light to its dead — like cities. Electric light. Candle light. Lamp light. Forerunners of the full might of Allied Armies, they walk alone and unafraid, into the many no-man's lands of the globe. Such are the **COMMANDOS OF THE WORLDLY ARMIES.**

IN our modern world, long before anyone knew the meaning of "black-outs" — "Global War" — "Commandos"—there was need for just such groups to go into the "no-man's land" of our cities. Its alley-ways and by-ways. Its slums and forgotten sections. Where for years, darkness had bred death, fear and restlessness. Where the enemy was strongly entrenched . . . Fighting the eternal fight against light and God. Where Poverty, ugly and stark, made her abode, sleeping with injustice and evil. Few ventured there . . . It was not safe. Priests

worked nearby, and so did Religious. But there was need . . . great need . . . for the Catholic Laity to arise and become the eyes, feet, hands and ears of those who alone hold the key to our Father's House. Scouts were needed to make forays, and bring back both "captives" and knowledge of the enemy's position. **Commandos of God were needed.**

Friendship House Staff Workers are just that — **COMMANDOS OF GOD.** Youth of America—clear-sighted and unafraid—here is a work to do. For God, and the world. Have you an evening to give, a day to spend, a month, a year, a life-time? Get in touch with us, and we shall put you to work. Your job? Simple. To bring the light of God where there is darkness. To bring peace where there is strife. To kill fear, and quiet restlessness in men's souls and hearts. To silence the noises of the world so that men may hear God's Voice. In the midst of a global war that is being waged to make men free of want—and to build a new world . . . we call to you also to build Christ's Kingdom. Now. Today . . . **FOR TOMORROW MAY BE TOO LATE.**

IF you have years to give—the Staff Workers of Friendship House will welcome you. You will be trained. Two years of theology, apologetics, liturgy, will give you the principles of your Faith, in all their luminous beauty . . . so that you will know what you are fighting for. Then each will learn the weapons he wields best . . . what if their names are humble and soft . . . such as: Group Work. Community Resources. Recreational Work. Kindergarten Work. Club Work. Office Work. Sewing. First Aid. Home Nursing. Cooking. They have sharp edges—sharpened by Charity . . . They will cut deep . . . like surgeons do. But not to kill . . . to heal. Yours will be the darkness of the slums where you shall live—day and night. Sharing it with those whose lot has chained them there. Your very presence, a help and solace to many. Your meals will be spartan. Iron rations of the poor. But you will never be healthier. Your bed may be hard, but your sleep will be soft and refreshing. Your uniform—second-hand clothing. But it will look gallant and gay. For it will be the uniform of God's best friends, the poor. Neither gold nor silver will you have—nor salaries . . . But St. Francis of Assisi will give you the wealth of his blessing . . . Blessed Martin de Porres, the treasure of his smile . . . and Christ will pay you back—now and in Eternity, with a measure pressed down and overflowing . . .

Have you an hour, an evening, a day, or a week to give? Join Friendship House Volunteers . . . Part-time Commandos of God. Auxiliary troops of the Lord. Scouts of Our Lady and the Saints . . . to you, too, knowledge will be given, a sharp weapon of love whose other name is Charity. You too will go into forays and bring back **SOULS . . .**

The darkness of the night is upon us. Men's souls are frightened . . . and are getting lost in the darkness. There is so little time. The abyss is yawning while we seek solace in loud music, movies, and fun . . . to forget . . . that which cannot be forgotten . . . **THE WAR . . .** Let us all go to war. For men's souls, for men's hearts. For Victory and Peace . . . **GOD'S . . .** without which any other will be but an illusion. At your doorstep is the enemy . . . at your hand, the remedy . . . one of many—true . . . but just now so needed by the Church. Enrollments are open—in the **COMMANDOS OF GOD . . .** for a life that is **AN ADVENTURE WITH HIM! WHO WANTS TO SIGN UP . . .**

THE BARONESS JOTS IT DOWN

IMPOSSIBLE . . . said Nancy. Foolish, that is what I call it . . . chipped in Flewy. Not for the February issue . . . with the March taxes facing everyone in the U.S.A. You just can't ask for money, it is contrary to reason, Walter, the logical, stated . . . Maybe. Yet, that is just what I propose to do, for there is still the Kindergarten Store. It has to be furnished . . . little cute tables for the tots . . . paint for the walls to make pictures with . . . all about how Little Jesus played. For he did play. Remember? All children do. And He was a Child. It will be such fun letting the children figure out what He did play at, and with. Baseball? Or just ball? Blindman's Buff? Or just running around? Yea . . . it will be fun. Kids always hit the nail on the head, and we bet you (if we had anything to bet with) they probably know anyhow . . . what the Christ Child played with and at . . . kids know so many things . . . they sure do.

Well, anyhow, there will be tables, and chairs or benches, paint for the walls . . . A Statue of the Christ Child which has already been donated! Hangers to hang their coats on, lots of colored paper, crayons, scissors to get (if we can) gay curtains, a piano (who has a piano or two to give away . . . plus the price of getting it to 135th Street?). Yes . . . that is about all to start . . . so we shall need money just when taxes come due. And this time we will ask St. Francis of Assisi, the Saint who courted Lady Poverty, to work overtime for us, for he can . . . if anyone can, make people love the spirit of Holy Poverty . . . and when one loves . . . one practices . . . and what better chance will our friends have to practice then . . . than in March, 1943? So all we really do . . . Is give them an opportunity to fall in love with one of the Cardinal Virtues . . . Isn't it really nice of us?

I WENT a-traveling this month. All the way to Chicago and points West . . . to visit our Friendship House in the Windy City and see what all Ann is doing there. Well, she is doing fine, thank you. And you can read about it in another column. But she has needs too, and it takes a long time to make good beggars out of people. So just lend her a hand. Here is a little list of things she needs . . . Books . . . Catholic NEW books . . . for that eternal Victory Book Campaign—that brings souls back to God . . . games for her kids . . .

CHICAGO HOUSE

Ann Harrigan

FRRIENDSHIP HOUSE in Chicago has a great sorrow this month, for it is with a heavy heart that we have to report that Miss Ellen Tarry is leaving our midst and going back to New York to resume her writing. It all started when Eddie Doherty went "elephant hunting," and Hezekiah got the wanderlust. You see, there is another book in the offing, and Ellen felt that being Associate Director of Friendship House and bringing out the book just could not be done. It had to be either one or the other. But we envy Harlem Friendship House her return to New York, for she has been and always will be one of the moving spirits of interracial justice. At a farewell reception in Ellen's honor we all extended our hopes for the successful completion of her book, and the wish that she come back to Chicago for it definitely will not be easy to replace her splendid work and achievements.

Mildred Wiley is now in charge of the Casita de Porres, 305 E. 43rd Street, as well as being Office Manager. Friendship House is really lucky to be the beneficiary of her many talents, wide experience and winsome, personal charm. We also have a very sincere friend and worker in Artice Baldwin, of St. Elizabeth's Parish, for she is a woman who really practices the works of mercy. We have begun saying Compline at 9:30 P.M. when the volunteers close the children's center. And those

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Volunteers! God has certainly blessed us with very wonderful ones—Miss McCoy, our "Apostle of Pamphlets" and indefatigable passer of Blessed Martin's basket, Eleanor Goetzl, our charming glee club director, Fr. Cantwell and John Yancey of our Labor School, Mavis Mixon and Tena Rosenman, who conduct our Negro History classes for adults and children, Cliff Thomas, who does wood work, Mary Alice, our stenographer, Marge Sylvia, Bernice, David, Roland, Marcella, Anne, and a host of others at the Casita. We really stand in awe of their generosity.

MANY things are coming into our place, many good useful things; some old, useless things, that have to be thrown out. One of our prized possessions is the juke box that Father Czul, not only gave us but delivered as well—in these ration days that is really something—but we still need a ladder and saw, a roaster, the tools for our wood work class, etc. Then there is Father Chelminski who gave us several metal cabinets, and other good things, too—we surely cannot forget such generosity—Thus we learn that God sends everything in His good time, and that our little Friendship House here grows because of the grace of God which has prompted all these good people to sacrifice something in order to bring nearer the day when love and justice among men will truly reign.

CHICAGO FRIENDSHIP HOUSE

Adult Center
309 East 43rd Street

Casita De Porres
305 East 43rd Street

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday

Lecture and Tea
Religious Discussion
Glee Club
Labor School
Negro History Class

Glee Club Story Hour of Religion
Organized Play
Sewing
Arts and Crafts
Negro History, Wood Work, Religion
Reading, Drawing

All Week Library 10 A.M. to 10 P.M.

she has 200 now . . . Volunteers, ever more of these . . . there is so much to do . . . Food . . . the kind that is not rationed anyhow. And don't forget, friends of Chicago, that the address is 309 East 43rd Street. Drop in anytime . . . Ann will be glad to see you.

RENTS, tables, pianos . . . even money . . . The Saints, God bless

them, get all these for us . . . sooner or later . . . but when it comes to a Housemother . . . they just seem to forget. Maybe what with this war, and one thing and another, they are pretty busy . . . Still . . . we just wonder a tiny bit. A Novena to Martin, another to St. Francis . . . maybe we should try a new Saint. Any sugges-

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STAFF REPORTER

by N.J.C.

ON February fourteenth Friendship House was five years old. Five years since a lone white woman with one suitcase, a battered old typewriter, and the courage of a Saint, left all whom she held most dear and came to Harlem to rent an apartment where no white person had ever lived before. Five years since she began alone to live this "strange" form of Catholic Action, which embraces poverty for the sake of justice and the realization that we are our brothers' keepers in the Mystical Body of Christ.

Five years of heroic struggle — five years of tears and weariness and pain . . . five years of fighting prejudice and antagonism. Five years of joy, too, and laughter and growth from one wee apartment to the size we are today. Surely this achievement was worthy of the best celebration we could create! So without funds, but with the enthusiastic cooperation of everyone, we surprised the Baroness on January Twenty-seventh, with an entertainment in her honor. It had to be in January, because she is away this month.

Invited and participating were those who had contributed to Friendship House's growth . . . volunteers, workers from "way back," as well as all of us at Friendship House today. The Cubs' songs were adorable . . . the Generals' singing and dancing first rate . . . the Volunteers' beautifully and tunefully represented by Muriel Zimmermann, and the Mother's Club gave the "B" a handsome fluorescent desk lamp, something she has needed and wanted for a long time.

Mr. Romero, author of "My Friend and Yours" in this issue, and one of the Baroness' oldest and most faithful friends in Harlem, gave the address of appreciation, and it was a masterpiece, voicing the sentiments of all associated with her.

The Staff Workers felt inspired (!) to do an original skit of one of our meals, with the Baroness presiding. I "was" the Baroness, Russian accent, deep voice, straight posture. It was loads of fun, and everyone seemed to enjoy it.

A gay party, a gala evening, and the Baroness appreciated most keenly the tribute paid her. Humbly, she felt she didn't deserve it, but we knew she did, and much more than we were able to give her.



THE BARONESS JOTS IT DOWN

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tions? It is this way. Nancy runs Friendship House in Harlem. Ann, the one in Chicago. Belle, the Social Service in Harlem. Eleanor, the Cubs' Club. Walter, the Educational Department. Flewy, the Library. Katherine, the Office. Marie, the Clothing Room. So everything is covered, even lectures and running Ann and Nancy, which is my job. But as far as a House-mother for our Staff's Apartment, Madonna Flat, is concerned . . . we have no luck. And what is a House-mother in Friendship House? Well, she is the angel of mercy who makes us a home . . . the servant of the servants of Christ in the Negro . . . the pivot, from whom revolves their human . . . she must be motherly . . . she must be able to make a heavenly salad just out of cabbage, and stretch two dollars to provide 20 meals, all balanced . . . she must have that "inimitable touch" that makes a "home" out of an apartment on 135th Street for those who left home, and mothers, to nurse Christ's Wounds in the Negro. She can cheer with a word . . . make a cold disappear with a smile and some hot milk on a gay tray . . . she can be "all things" to each one of us. Make grey-days, gay . . . and gay days gayer . . . a strange vocation . . . Yes, perhaps . . . but somehow we think, a satisfying one . . . Blessed Mother of God . . . we turn to you. Patroness of all mothers, even housemothers . . . will you please help us out . . . for we must eat . . . and there is no one to cook. We can, but if we do . . . the other work suffers. Please send us someone who will understand . . . how much we need a "Mother" in our Friendship House . . . Please.

FIVE years have flown so swiftly . . . what will another five bring? More facilities to take care of more children we hope . . . more books — they are such a wonderful means of spreading Catholic Action, bringing people to and back to the Faith—more clothes and food to carry on the corporal works of mercy . . . more friends

MY FRIEND AND YOURS

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graduates and students in race relations. She is teaching them by example and practice how to apply first-hand the principles of interracial justice as enunciated in the classroom of various schools they have attended or are attending. Friendship House is in essence, a laboratory of Catholic interracialism. It is supernaturalized social work, aiming to perfect the lives of its workers through personal holiness. They must possess "courage, vision, understanding, a love of Christ and His poor, and a clear realization of the Mystical Body of Christ." We speak of Friendship House, first in terms of the first one established in Canada. But the Friendship House we are mainly concerned about is the Friendship House where black and white meet; where black live and white live, eat, pray and sleep side by side in communion all for the love of God. Its motto is "without interracial justice, social justice will fail."

Her interracialism, as applied to social work, calls for living with and among the people you are working with and for. Sharing with them the inconveniences of life. Learning to understand them and giving them the opportunity to understand you. She is patient, she is kind, she is not pretentious. She rejoices with the truth. And as St. Paul says, she "bears with all things and endures all things." She is meek and she hungers after justice. She is a peacemaker and she suffers persecution for justice' sake. And she listens as Our Lord says: "Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven."

She is *my* friend — she is *your* friend.

to help us pay the rent, the light and gas—the college fees for our young Negro students . . . and the continued good will and help of our many good friends who have helped us over many hurdles . . . who are helping to carry Christ's Cross in the Negro. Beggars we are, and beggars we always will be . . .

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